The pride of North Carolina's electric cooperatives

Volume 45, No. 1, January 2013

Carolina Country

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PERIODICAL

Act Locally

INSIDE:

Supporting businesses
Grassroots politics
Local history & hope

Adventures in Wake Forest—page 30

How to Beat the High Cost of Sunken Treasure

Take home 200 carats of genuine natural emeralds for the unbelievable price of ***ONLY $79!***

Stumbling on sunken treasure can be more trouble than it's worth. Just ask the amateur diver who discovered thousands of raw emeralds off the Florida coast. His find is potentially worth millions, but only if the courts award him ownership. Lucky for you, this spectacular 200-carat ***Cayman Emerald Necklace*** is all "treasure" with none of the legal trouble. Call today and you can bring it home for only $79!

Once upon a time the biggest dangers of the deep were pirates and sharks. But modern fortune-hunters face a much more menacing foe: lawyers. Instead of walking the plank and fighting great whites, anyone who stumbles on lost jewels gets tied up in legal battles that can last for years. But by coming to us for precious gems, you get something to brag about right away.

You hit the emerald jackpot. Our Cayman Emerald Necklace didn't come from the bottom of the sea. But this stunning, 200-carat garland of polished natural emeralds is exactly the kind of prize that every diver dreams of discovering. And today you can claim this 18" strand (with 2" extender and luxurious gold-finished clasp) without getting wet.

Other jewelry stores hate us because we don't play by the rules. They raise their prices because they can get away with it. But Stauer wants to turn the luxury business on its head. We took the Cayman Emerald Necklace to an independent appraiser who works with auction houses, estate sales and insurance companies. He valued it at $690.* We want you to have it for ONLY $79. I know it sounds ridiculous, but we're serious.

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. Let us send you the Cayman Emerald Necklace. If you're not completely impressed, send it back within 30 days for a complete refund of your purchase price. It's that simple. Call off the search and call us today. Your 200-carat emerald wish has come true!

You get 200 carats of stunning emerald for only $79

Necklace enlarged to show detail and color.

Cayman Emerald Collection

Necklace (200 ctw) ~~*Appraised at $690*~~
Your price only **$79** +s&p
Bracelet (55 ctw) *Only* **$59** +s&p
Earrings (10 ctw) *Only* **$49** +s&p
Necklace, Bracelet & Earrings Collection
~~**$187**~~ *Now only* **$99** +s&p ***Save $88!***

Extremely limited offer for first 2500 orders from this ad—Call NOW!

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Promotional Code CEC131-02
Please mention this code when you call.

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Smart Luxuries—Surprising Prices

January 2013
Volume 45, No. 1

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Your cooperative sends you Carolina Country as a convenient, economical way to share with its members information about services, director elections, meetings and management decisions. The magazine also carries legal notices that otherwise would be published in other media at greater cost.

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Roots, cooperatives and our energy future

By Alex Loflin

Picture with me a plant—a tree, a flower, even grass. Now think about the things those plants need. They definitely need water, nutrients and sunlight. But what about a good root system? Without a sufficient root system, the plant cannot secure water or nutrients, and it won't be stable enough to reach sunlight. Roots are important, whether they're actual roots or those of an action like grassroots advocacy. To me, grassroots advocacy refers to citizens who unite to support a cause they believe is important.

Grassroots advocacy is an integral component of EnergyUnited, the electric cooperative that sponsored me on the 2012 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. Their mission is to deliver reliable, affordable energy to rural communities and to improve the quality of life for their members and those communities. There are many examples of how EnergyUnited employs grassroots advocacy: information on how to be energy efficient, grants to local teachers to help fund unique classroom projects, and, of course, delegates for the Youth Tour.

EnergyUnited believes in informing government officials about the concerns of their members' communities. When representatives from a cooperative contact government officials, they speak for the people who elected them—the people at the grassroots—not investors or special interests.

Any kind of grassroots advocacy must have a strong root system. As a group of citizens who shares a passion for something—whether it's energy, produce or banking—a cooperative has this root system in place. This passion creates ownership, which then grows ideas that are more effectively put into action.

I have seen grassroots advocacy in action in my 4-H club. A member had the idea to host a fun event to encourage people in our community to develop healthy habits. The 4H members liked the idea, and we voted to hold a health fair. At our health fair, we interacted with community members of all ages and provided them with resources and encouragement to make healthy lifestyle choices. Because this event grew out of our collective desire, and we all worked together, our health fair was a success.

As a Youth Leadership Council member for the electric cooperatives across the nation, I will communicate with other teens and adults. I have learned the value of effective communication through 4-H, FFA and other leadership positions. I also have some understanding of electricity production, transmission, and how that all affects the environment. Through preparing for and participating in various environmental competitions, I believe that I do have a good grasp on these topics.

One of my passions is studying environmental issues as part of the Canon Envirothon program. I want to be an advocate for wisely utilizing our natural resources to provide a better quality of life for all of us. Our goal is to collaborate for developing sensible solutions to today's complex energy issues, to share these solutions with confidence and clarity, and to leverage the power of the cooperative model.

The Youth Leadership Council will provide me a unique opportunity to continue to live out my passion. Look how promising and vibrant this flower is when all of its parts are working together. Using their strength in grassroots advocacy, cooperatives can address our energy challenges and help grow a brighter future. I welcome the chance to join with other youth in this endeavor and to represent North Carolina.

Alex Loflin lives in Denton and is a senior at Hope Academy. After graduating, she plans to attend North Carolina State University.

More mailboxes, please

I read the article on "More Mailboxes, Less Mail" [December 2012] and am glad to hear the U.S. Postal Service is going to have more access in stores for their customers. When I was growing up they had post offices in the stores. They also had mailboxes in neighborhoods to mail your letters. We have been told not to put bills or any items with checks in our own mailbox for the mail carrier to take because of possible theft, a suggestion I follow. But I have a terrible time finding a mailbox close to home where I can place mail. Very few shopping areas have mail boxes. They need to put mail boxes in more locations.

Phyllis Byrom, Weddington, Union Power

Strange lights

About "The Mysterious Brown Mountain Lights [October 2012], I have always thought that there was uranium buried there and it may be an old mine. Someone needs to take a ditch digger uncover what is inside of the mountain. Maybe they are they scared of what they might uncover. I don't think it's an Indian carrying a light.

When I was growing up in the country, I used to see strange balls of fire. My dad told me it was jack-o-lanterns. There was an old log house near my home built in the Civil War days. A big oak tree stood alongside it. Around 9 or 10 at night I could walk past it and a ball of fire would roll down each limb of the giant oak until it got to the upstairs window and would roll inside and disappear. The cabin is gone now but it happened every night.

Rotten wood gives off lights after it gets wet and at night it glows in the dark. I used to kick it at night to see the sparks fly. My dad called it "foxfire."

Mary Hepler, Mooresville, EnergyUnited

Jamie Clark of Rockingham County took this photograph after a snow in late January 2012 and sent it to us.

Telitha Cook of Harmony sent us this picture of a Canada goose on Lakewood Park in Statesville.

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SUPER COUPON!

FREE! WITH MINIMUM PURCHASE OF $9.99

PITTSBURGH 6 PIECE SCREWDRIVER SET

ITEM 47770

REG. PRICE $4.99

LIMIT 1 - Only available with qualifying minimum purchase (excludes gift value). Coupon good at our stores or website or by phone. Cannot be used with other discount, coupon or prior purchase. Offer good while supplies last. Shipping & Handling charges may apply if not picked up in-store. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/26/13. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

54910361

SUPER COUPON!

20% OFF ANY SINGLE ITEM!

LIMIT 1 - Save 20% on any one item purchased at our stores or website or by phone. *Cannot be used with other discount, coupon, gift cards, Inside Track Club membership, extended service plans or on any of the following: compressors, generators, tool storage or carts, welders, floor jacks, Towable Ride-On Trencher (Item 65162), open box items, in-store event or parking lot sale items. Not valid on prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase date with original receipt. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/26/13. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

32583212

SUPER COUPON!

12" RATCHET BAR CLAMP/SPREADER

PITTSBURGH

LOT NO. 46807/68975/69221/69222

Item 46807 shown

SAVE 63% **$1.99** REG. PRICE $5.49

17216673

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SUPER COUPON!

CEN-TECH

AUTOMATIC BATTERY FLOAT CHARGER

Item 42292 shown

SAVE 61% LOT NO. 42292/69594/69955

$4.99 REG. PRICE $12.99

66231124

LIMIT 9 - Good at our stores or website or by phone. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 4/26/13. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

SUPER COUPON!

Haul Master

LOT NO. 41005/69780

1000 LB. CAPACITY SWING-BACK TRAILER JACK

SAVE 42% **$19.99** REG. PRICE $34.99

Item 41005 shown

12904130

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SUPER COUPON!

9 PIECE FULLY POLISHED COMBINATION WRENCH SETS

PITTSBURGH

SAE LOT NO. 42304/69043

METRIC LOT NO. 42305/69044

Item 42304 shown

SAVE 53% YOUR CHOICE! **$6.99** REG. PRICE $14.99

87235477

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SUPER COUPON!

WIRELESS DRIVEWAY ALERT SYSTEM

Bunker Hill Security

Item 93068 shown

SAVE 60% LOT NO. 93068/69590

Requires one 9 volt and three C batteries (sold separately).

$11.99 REG. PRICE $29.99

49725560

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SUPER COUPON!

12 VOLT MAGNETIC TOWING LIGHT KIT

Haul Master

Item 67455 shown

SAVE 66% LOT NO. 67455/69626/96933/69925

$9.99 REG. PRICE $29.99

23117986

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SUPER COUPON!

NEW!

800 RATED WATTS/900 MAX. WATTS PORTABLE GENERATOR

STORM CAT

Item 69381 shown

SAVE $90 LOT NO. 66619/60338/69381

$89.99 REG. PRICE $179.99

13344883

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SUPER COUPON!

18 PIECE T-HANDLE BALL POINT AND HEX KEY WRENCH SET

SAVE 33% LOT NO. 96645 PITTSBURGH

$11.99 REG. PRICE $17.99

90942971

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SUPER COUPON!

CENTRAL PNEUMATIC

3 GALLON, 100 PSI OILLESS HOT DOG STYLE AIR COMPRESSOR

Item 97080 shown

SAVE 50% LOT NO. 97080/69269

$39.99 REG. PRICE $79.99

96426153

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SUPER COUPON!

PITTSBURGH AUTOMOTIVE

3 TON HEAVY DUTY JACK STANDS

Item 38846 shown

SAVE 54% LOT NO. 38846/69597

$15.99 REG. PRICE $34.99

67934265

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SUPER COUPON!

US★GENERAL

30", 11 DRAWER ROLLER CABINET

INCLUDES:

- 6 Drawer Top Chest
- 2 Drawer Middle Section
- 3 Drawer Roller Cabinet

SAVE $150 LOT NO. 67421

$149.99 REG. PRICE $299.99

21868369

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SUPER COUPON!

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS

80 PIECE ROTARY TOOL KIT

Item 68986 shown

SAVE 72% LOT NO. 68986/97626/69451

$6.99 REG. PRICE $24.99

46561298

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SUPER COUPON!

ADJUSTABLE SHADE AUTO-DARKENING WELDING HELMET

SAVE 47% LOT NO. 46092

CHICAGO ELECTRIC WELDING

$36.99 REG. PRICE $69.99

62272439

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SUPER COUPON!

1500 WATT DUAL TEMPERATURE HEAT GUN (572°/1112°)

drillmaster LOT NO. 96289

SAVE 60% **$7.99** REG. PRICE $19.99

13726558

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SUPER COUPON!

ELECTRIC CHAIN SAW SHARPENER

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS

4-1/4" GRINDING WHEEL INCLUDED

Item 68221 shown

LOT NO. 68221/93213

SAVE 40% **$29.99** REG. PRICE $49.99

40886758

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SUPER COUPON!

PITTSBURGH

6" DIGITAL CALIPER

Includes two 1.5V button cell batteries.

LOT NO. 47257

SAVE 66% **$9.99** REG. PRICE $29.99

37918238

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SUPER COUPON!

6.5 HP OHV HORIZONTAL SHAFT GAS ENGINES (212 CC)

Item 68120 shown

PREDATOR ENGINES

SAVE $80 LOT NO. 68120/69730/60363

LOT NO. 68121/69727, CALIFORNIA ONLY

$99.99 REG. PRICE $179.99

98443966

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SUPER COUPON!

MULTI-USE TRANSFER PUMP

PITTSBURGH AUTOMOTIVE

LOT NO. 66418

SAVE 61%

$4.99

REG. PRICE $12.99

9360057O

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SUPER COUPON!

18 VOLT CORDLESS 3/8" DRILL/DRIVER AND FLASHLIGHT KIT

SAVE 50%

drill master

LOT NO. 68287/69652

Item 68287 shown

Includes one 18V NiCd battery and charger.

$19.99

REG. PRICE $39.99

49528201

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SUPER COUPON!

8 FT. 4" x 11 FT. 6" FARM QUALITY TARP

Item 2707 shown

LOT NO. 2707/ 60457/69197

SAVE 50%

$5.99

REG. PRICE $11.99

16824784

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SUPER COUPON!

MOVER'S DOLLY

HaulMaster

Item 93388 shown

LOT NO. 93888/ 60497

1000 LB. CAPACITY

SAVE 46%

$7.99

REG. PRICE $14.99

20389466

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SUPER COUPON!

2.5 HP, 21 GALLON, 125 PSI VERTICAL AIR COMPRESSOR

Item 67847 shown

SAVE $70

CENTRAL PNEUMATIC

LOT NO. 67847/69091

$149.99

REG. PRICE $219.99

32164430

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SUPER COUPON!

300 LB. CAPACITY

LOW-PROFILE CREEPER

Item 2745 shown

LOT NO. 2745/69094

Tools sold separately.

SAVE 55%

$17.99

REG. PRICE $39.99

23672689

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SUPER COUPON!

2 PIECE 1500 LB. CAPACITY VEHICLE DOLLIES

Item 67338 shown

LOT NO. 67338/ 60343

HaulMaster

SAVE 50%

$39.99

REG. PRICE $79.99

56000750

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SUPER COUPON!

2 PIECE STEEL LOADING RAMPS

HaulMaster

LOT NO. 44649/ 69591/69646

SAVE 50%

1000 LB. CAPACITY

Item 44649 shown

$39.99

REG. PRICE $79.99

10810212

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SUPER COUPON!

SAVE 41%

CHICAGO ELECTRIC WELDING

MIG-FLUX WELDING CART

Welder and accessories sold separately.

LOT NO. 69340/90305

$34.99

REG. PRICE $59.99

Item 69340 shown

95866589

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SUPER COUPON!

Item 68751 shown

45 WATT SOLAR PANEL KIT

SAVE $90

THUNDERBOLT solar

$139.99

REG. PRICE $229.99

LOT NO. 68751/ 90599

91963067

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SUPER COUPON!

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS

RECIPROCATING SAW WITH ROTATING HANDLE

LOT NO. 65570

SAVE 50%

$19.99

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SUPER COUPON!

LOT NO. 68143

9000 LB. ELECTRIC WINCH WITH REMOTE CONTROL AND AUTOMATIC BRAKE

BADLAND

SAVE $120

$279.99

REG. PRICE $399.99

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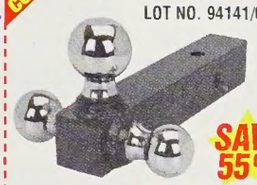
SUPER COUPON!

TRIPLE BALL TRAILER HITCH

LOT NO. 94141/69874



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SAVE 55%

HaulMaster

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4 PIECE ADJUSTABLE WRENCH SET

Item 903 shown

PITTSBURGH

SAVE 55%

$8.99

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SUPER COUPON!

60" WORKBENCH WITH 4 DRAWERS

WINDSOR DESIGN

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SAVE $90

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NON-CONTACT INFRARED THERMOMETER WITH LASER TARGETING

Item 69465 shown

LOT NO. 69465/ 96451/60725

Requires two AAA batteries (sold separately).

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SAVE 50%

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SUPER COUPON!

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WEIGHS 27 LBS.

Item 68053 shown

SAVE $60

LOT NO. 68053/ 69252/60569

RAPID PUMP® 1.5 TON ALUMINUM RACING JACK

$59.99

REG. PRICE $119.99

3-1/2 PUMPS LIFTS MOST VEHICLES!

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SUPER COUPON!

Item 68424 shown

700 FT. LBS. MAX. TORQUE

CENTRAL PNEUMATIC EARTHQUAKE

LOT NO. 68424/2623

1/2" INDUSTRIAL QUALITY SUPER HIGH TORQUE IMPACT WRENCH

SAVE $50

$69.99

REG. PRICE $119.99

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SUPER COUPON!

Bunker Hill Security

SAVE 28%

36 LED SOLAR SECURITY LIGHT

LOT NO. 98085/ 69644/69890/60498

Item 98085 shown

Includes 1.2 volt, 600mAh/6 volt NiCd rechargeable battery pack.

$17.99

REG. PRICE $24.99

77908486

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SUPER COUPON!

LOT NO. 93280/ 60601

1500 WATT CONTINUOUS/ 3000 WATT PEAK POWER INVERTER

SAVE $40

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER SYSTEMS

Item 93280 shown

Not for marine use.

$119.99

REG. PRICE $159.99

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SUPER COUPON!

CHICAGO ELECTRIC WELDING

90 AMP FLUX WIRE WELDER

LOT NO. 68887

NO GAS REQUIRED!

$89.99

REG. PRICE $149.99

SAVE $60

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SUPER COUPON!

Item 46104 shown

HEAVY DUTY RETRACTABLE AIR HOSE REEL WITH 3/8" x 25 FT. HOSE

LOT NO. 46104/ 69234/ 69266

SAVE 42%

$39.99

REG. PRICE $69.99

CENTRAL PNEUMATIC

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SUPER COUPON!

500 LB. CAPACITY ALUMINUM CARGO CARRIER

LOT NO. 92655/69688/ 60771

Item 92655 shown

HaulMaster

$69.99

REG. PRICE $129.99

SAVE $60

61261290

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SUPER COUPON!

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS

10" SLIDING COMPOUND MITER SAW

LOT NO. 98199

SAVE $70

$79.99

REG. PRICE $149.99

58720583

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Missouri Congresswoman will head the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson has served in Congress for 16 years.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association board of directors in December appointed U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (R-Mo.) as CEO, effective March 1. Emerson is retiring from Congress in February, and will become the fifth CEO in NRECA's 71-year history. She will officially join the organization on February 11.

"We conducted an exhaustive search to identify the very best individual to lead a great association," said NRECA board president Mike Guidry of Louisiana. "We found that person in Jo Ann Emerson. Her background as a member of Congress and a trade association executive—coupled with her extensive knowledge of the issues facing electric cooperatives and rural America—make her eminently qualified to lead NRECA and represent the interests of its members. The respect she has from both sides of the aisle and her proven ability to bridge political and policy divides and find common ground will serve us well."

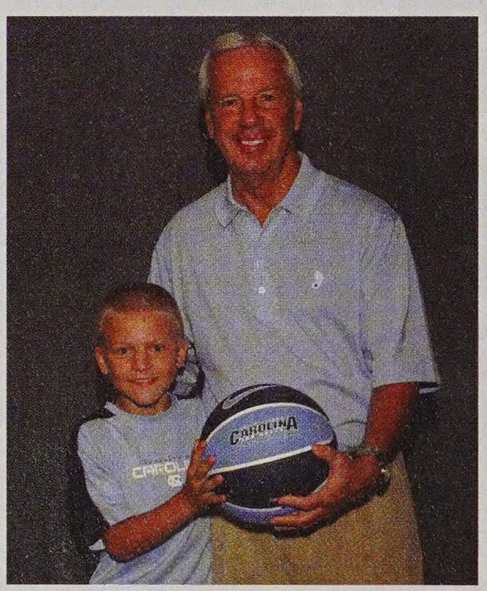
First elected to the U.S. House in 1996 from Missouri's 8th Congressional District, Emerson most recently served on the House Appropriations Committee and chaired the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Subcommittee. She has taken a leadership role on agriculture, health care and government reform issues during her congressional career and won recognition for her work on energy, including being presented with the NRECA Distinguished Service Award in 2006.

Carolyn Herr Watts, retired senior vice president of the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives knew Emerson when they both worked in Washington. "Jo Ann Emerson has championed issues for rural America during her lengthy tenure in Congress," Watts said. "She knows how to cross party lines to reach a consensus to pass legislation."

Along with her committee posts, Emerson also serves as co-chairman of the Tuesday Group, a council of House GOP centrists; is a member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly; and holds a position on the board of the Congressional Hunger Center. A graduate of Ohio Wesleyan University, she held executive roles in communications and government affairs with the National Restaurant Association and the American Insurance Association before being elected to the first of nine terms in Congress.

Apply for Touchstone Energy summer basketball camps by March 30

North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives are awarding middle-school students full scholarships to attend basketball camp on college campuses this summer. Young men can apply to attend the Roy Williams Basketball Camp June 15–19 at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, and young women can apply to attend the Kellie Harper Basketball Academy Aug. 1–4 at N.C. State University in Raleigh. Campers will stay in dorms and work directly with the coaches and current and former players at the overnight camps. Students must be in sixth, seventh or eighth grade for the 2013–2014 school year to be eligible to apply, and applications must be postmarked by March 30. Statewide, more than 50 students will receive Touchstone Energy Sports Camp scholarships this year. For more information or to download the application, go to www.ncelectriccooperatives.com/community and click on the orange Sports Camp Scholarship logo.



Triston Atkins, pictured with UNC head coach Roy Williams, attended camp last summer on a scholarship from Surry-Yadkin EMC. Triston is the son of Travis and Angela Atkins.

Jasmine McBride, daughter of Patrick and Debra McBride, attended the Kellie Harper Basketball Academy at N.C. State last summer on a full scholarship from Lumbee River EMC.

Running a pole top rescue in less than 3 minutes

Leonard Person and Kenny Simmons, line workers from Tri-County EMC in Dudley and Pee Dee EMC in Wadesboro, respectively, were crowned Pole Top Rescue champions in November at a statewide competition in Raleigh.

The competition among the state's electric cooperatives takes place every two years. This year's had two categories based on the type of fall restraints used by the competitors. Both categories used 100 percent fall protection, but there were differences in how the competitors were secured to the pole. One group secured themselves in the traditional way with a lifeline and life hook, while the other group used personal fall restraints that protect from falls during the ascent and descent.

Leonard Person, a three-time Pole Top Rescue champion, won the category with the new restraints that wrap around the pole, and set a new record, completing the "rescue" in 1:33.80, topping the previous record by more than 26 seconds. Simmons won first prize in the traditional category with a time of 1:36.74. They beat 21 other champions, each of whom won the event at their own cooperative earlier in the year when some 600 line workers participated.

In the Pole Top Rescue simulation, line workers place an emergency radio call, don climbing gear, scale 20 feet up a utility pole, rig a rope, lower a 105-pound mannequin and begin CPR.

The second and third place competitors using the new fall protection were Brantley Lawrence of Pitt & Greene EMC (Farmville) in a time of 1:37.02 and Chris Griffin of Union Power (Monroe) in a time of 1:57.62. Rounding out second and third place for the traditional life line and life hook category were Jason Worley of French Broad EMC (Marshall) in a time of 1:41.65 and Freddy White of Four County EMC (Burgaw) in a time of 2:02.80.

See more pictures and video in the Carolina Stories section on our website: www.carolinacountry.com

Duane Salstrand photos

Leonard Person set a new record and won for the third time.

Kenny Simmons won in the traditional lifeline category.

2012 Pole Top Rescue Competition Scoreboard

(in alphabetical order by co-op)

Name of Contestant	Electric Cooperative	Time (Minutes:seconds)
Matthew Byrum	Albemarle EMC, Hertford	2:14.69
Ben Hurley	Blue Ridge EMC, Lenoir	2:55.09
Chuck Nance	Brunswick EMC, Shallotte	2:51.04
Richard Augustson	Cape Hatteras Electric Buxton	2:43.23*
Jonathan Long	Carteret-Craven Electric, Newport	2:08.31
Harris Morrison	Central EMC, Sanford	2:29.52
Chad Bryant	Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, Tarboro	2:34.00*
Shay Reed	EnergyUnited, Statesville	2:10.59
Freddy White	Four County EMC, Burgaw	2:02.80*
Jason Worley	French Broad EMC, Marshall	1:41.65*
Jarrod Norris	Jones-Onslow EMC, Jacksonville	2:05.00
Mike Jones	Lumbee River EMC, Red Springs	2:49.63
Kenny Simmons	Pee Dee EMC, Wadesboro	1:36.74*
Brent Talley	Piedmont EMC, Hillsborough	2:44.29*
Brantley Lawrence	Pitt & Greene EMC, Farmville	1:37.02
Danny Lee	Randolph EMC, Asheboro	2:35.02
James Taylor	Roanoke Electric, Ahoskie	2:54.81
Timothy Williams	South River EMC, Dunn	2:54.47
Justin Collins	Surry-Yadkin EMC, Dobson	2:16.93
Matthew Neal	Tideland EMC, Pantego	3:08.36
Leonard Person	Tri-County EMC, Dudley	1:33.80
Chris Griffin	Union Power, Monroe	1:57.62
Cory Lawrence	Wake Electric, Wake Forest	2:29.77

** Denotes competitor wearing personal fall protection.*

Your cooperative represents you where it counts

An electric cooperative is a unique business model among energy providers. A cooperative provides energy to its members at the lowest possible cost, and the members have a direct voice in the operation of the cooperative by electing its board of directors.

Your cooperative provides an essential service — electricity — but it also plays a vital role in your community by supporting economic development, promoting education initiatives, and boosting other community causes. The cooperative has a positive impact on your quality of life.

Sometimes issues arise in Raleigh or Washington, D.C., that can affect your cooperative and you. In those instances, co-ops may ask members for to help communicate a clear, respectful message to elected officials. "Grassroots advocacy" is a term often used but is sometimes hard to explain. It means people speaking up for themselves rather than relying on others to speak for them.

Grassroots opportunities are all around us. A member participating in the election of a cooperative's leadership is a perfect example. Contacting legislators and other officials on important matters is another. A solid grassroots effort involving cooperative members is democracy at its best, and elected officials do respond to the concerns of their constituents. Cooperative members acting together — representing more than 2.5 million people in North Carolina and 42 million nationwide — are a powerful voice.

Mike Oliver

North Carolina District 1 Congressman G.K. Butterfield Jr. in Washington (center) meets with directors and staff of electric cooperatives in his district.

When the time comes for your co-op to ask for your help, you will not be alone. Cooperatives across the state and the entire nation frequently work together to monitor and influence state and federal legislative activities. When you make your voice heard as a member of a cooperative, the collective cooperative family stands with you and provides information to help you understand how policy decisions impact you, the community and your cooperative. Some organizations around the country mimic grassroots support by using technology to give the impression of representing a lot of people. But cooperatives do not need smoke and mirrors. Co-ops are real people with real power. Being a cooperative member should be cherished like your right to vote. Your voice as a cooperative member can have a major impact on the issues of the day.

Lawmakers want to hear from their constituents, and they need to be informed about the impact their decisions have on your electric bill. Lawmakers monitor phone calls, e-mail, letters and local newspapers. And they refer to new technology like Facebook and Twitter to gather feedback on their actions. Any of these methods can be an effective way to communicate your preferences to them.

You can further your engagement by attending cooperative events to learn about specific issues facing your cooperative, and to get to know your local elected officials who may be there as well. When you have an opportunity to meet your elected officials, tell them you are a proud member of an electric cooperative and remind them that co-ops are a reliable source of information for them.

In the coming months and years, co-ops in the electric utility business face a number of challenges to continue to provide electric power that is safe, reliable and affordable. Members will play a role in many ways. Through grassroots advocacy, members are the voice of the cooperative to elected officials. Elected officials need to hear from the cooperative and the cooperative needs to hear from you.

This is the fifth in a series prepared by the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives. Next month: Where your electric power comes from.

What You Can Do

Our Energy, Our Future is a national grassroots campaign that engages members of cooperatives in a conversation with elected officials about how we meet legislative goals while keeping electricity reliable and affordable. To date, over 500,000 participants have sent messages to their members of Congress. Elected officials are considering legislation that will affect how electricity is generated, delivered and its cost. The policy decisions they make can raise the electric bills of co-op member-owners. Join the conversation at www.ourenergy.coop.

Actual size is 40.6 mm

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MOBBING STORES
in broad daylight

Text and photos by Hannah Miller

"Cash mobs" recognize and support local businesses in one fell swoop

When Joe Cafaro started Joe's Italian Kitchen in Boone a dozen years ago, he brought in not only family recipes dating back 100 years to Calabria, Italy, he also brought in his retired father, Tony, to help out.

"He was making meat balls the day he died" (in 2010), Cafaro says.

And the Kitchen, which started out to be a delicatessen with paper plates, has added fine dining and become a place where business groups meet. At first, Cafaro recalls, "We had no room for a dishwasher," thus the paper plates.

He's fiercely proud of his and the restaurant's place in the community. They support youth athletics – softball, baseball, T-ball, "whatever," Cafaro says, and also Appalachian State University's theater and the local Red Cross. They're a corporate sponsor of Watauga County's famed 100-mile bicycle race, "Blood, Sweat and Gears," which draws more than 1,000 participants and benefits several local charities.

"My money goes back into the community," says Cafaro.

Local health food

Across Boone Heights Drive from Joe's sits Bare Essentials Natural Market. Like Joe's, it's local down to its roots, but in this case the roots are spinach, kale, lettuce and the like.

Blue Ridge EMC members Ben Henderson, a former health care professional, and Mary Underwood had been married two years when they decided in 1988 to buy the store and specialize in items dear to their hearts but practically unheard-of in Boone. They would specialize in local, organic produce and natural food supplements and remedies. At the time, Henderson recalls, "There was no local produce. Back then, the only agriculture was tobacco and cabbage."

Now, in addition to packaged organic supplements and remedies, the store carries local farm products ranging from eggs to lettuce and even including kale chips, a locally-produced snack made from dehydrated kale. "It's hard to keep those on the shelves," says produce manager Susan Hoke.

Payback time

When Boone's recently formed "cash mob" chose Nov. 3 as the day to shower cash and support on locally-owned businesses, Joe's and Bare Essentials got the nod. Like the sometimes-infamous flash mobs, cash mobs coalesce via Twitter and Facebook. Unlike those mobs, which aim to create spectacle, their mission is to generate support for locally-owned businesses.

Boone is only one of many North Carolina towns where stores and restaurants have been "mobbed" this year. Others include Cary, Thomasville, Pineville, Mount Holly, Franklin, Wake Forest and High Point.

This was the fourth adventure for the Boone group. "You actually start to look forward to these outings," said mobber Virginia Roseman. "It's like a dinner club."

Blue Ridge EMC member Pam Williamson got the ball rolling after learning about cash mobs on the Internet. "I knew about flash mobs," she said. "People would show up and sing Christmas carols and stuff."

But cash mobs? "I thought it was fascinating," she said.

Left page: *Bare Essentials' co-owner Ben Henderson, a member of Blue Ridge EMC, says the cash mob included some of his regular customers but also new faces.*

Below left, top: *Sandra Oldendorf of Valle Crucis gives her order to Carissa Dilley at Joe's Italian Kitchen..*

Below left, middle: *This Bare Essentials traffic jam is made up of Marsha Walpole (left) of Laurel Creek, who organized the mob; Pam Williamson (center) of Boone, whose idea it was; and Loretta Clawson (right), mayor of Boone.*

Below right: *That's fresh-picked Western North Carolina lettuce peeking out of Boone Mayor Loretta Clawson's Bare Essentials grocery bag. It was grown at Wild Pilgrim Farmstead in Lenoir.*

Below bottom: *No wonder Joe Cafaro is beaming. He just served $700 worth of lunches.*

Boone mayor Loretta Clawson echoed her at Bare Essentials as she stocked up on lettuce from Wild Pilgrim Farmstead of Lenoir. "I love it," said Clawson. In the current economy, she said, "so many of our businesses are hurting."

Pam Williamson knew it would take someone with social media experience to carry out her idea, so she took the idea to the executive committee of the Watauga County Democratic Party. The party organization already helped out at a homeless shelter and in building Habitat homes, she said. Her idea was accepted, but party affiliation isn't required for participation by either visitors or retailers. Among the eight establishments visited, more were Republican-owned than Democratic, Williamson guessed.

At Joe's, "We filled the place up," said Blue Ridge EMC member Charlotte Mizelle. "That's great."

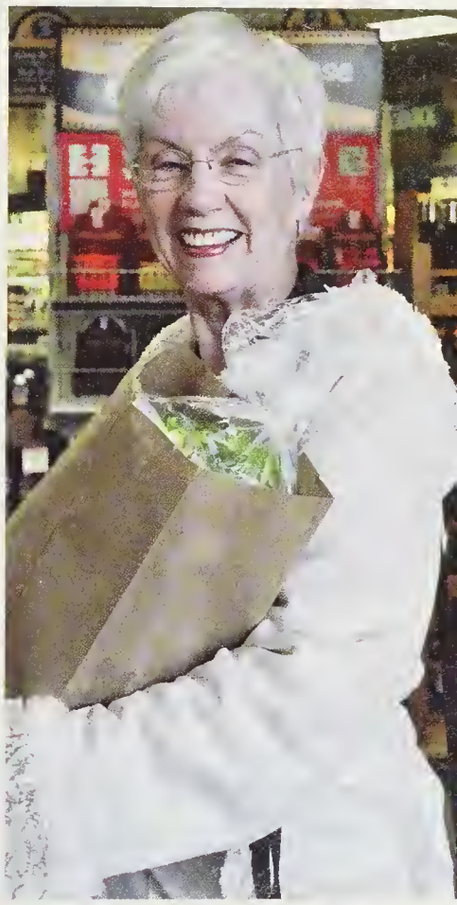
In about two and a half hours, mobbers spent $700 at Joe's, then $2,200 at Bare Essentials.

Pam Williamson and Ben Henderson think that's the tip of the iceberg.

"Part of the plan here is to get visibility for those businesses as well as that one-day infusion of cash," Williamson said.

Many of Henderson's customers he knew already, but some he'd never seen before. "I think they'll be back," he said.

Hannah Miller is a Carolina Country contributing writer based in Charlotte.

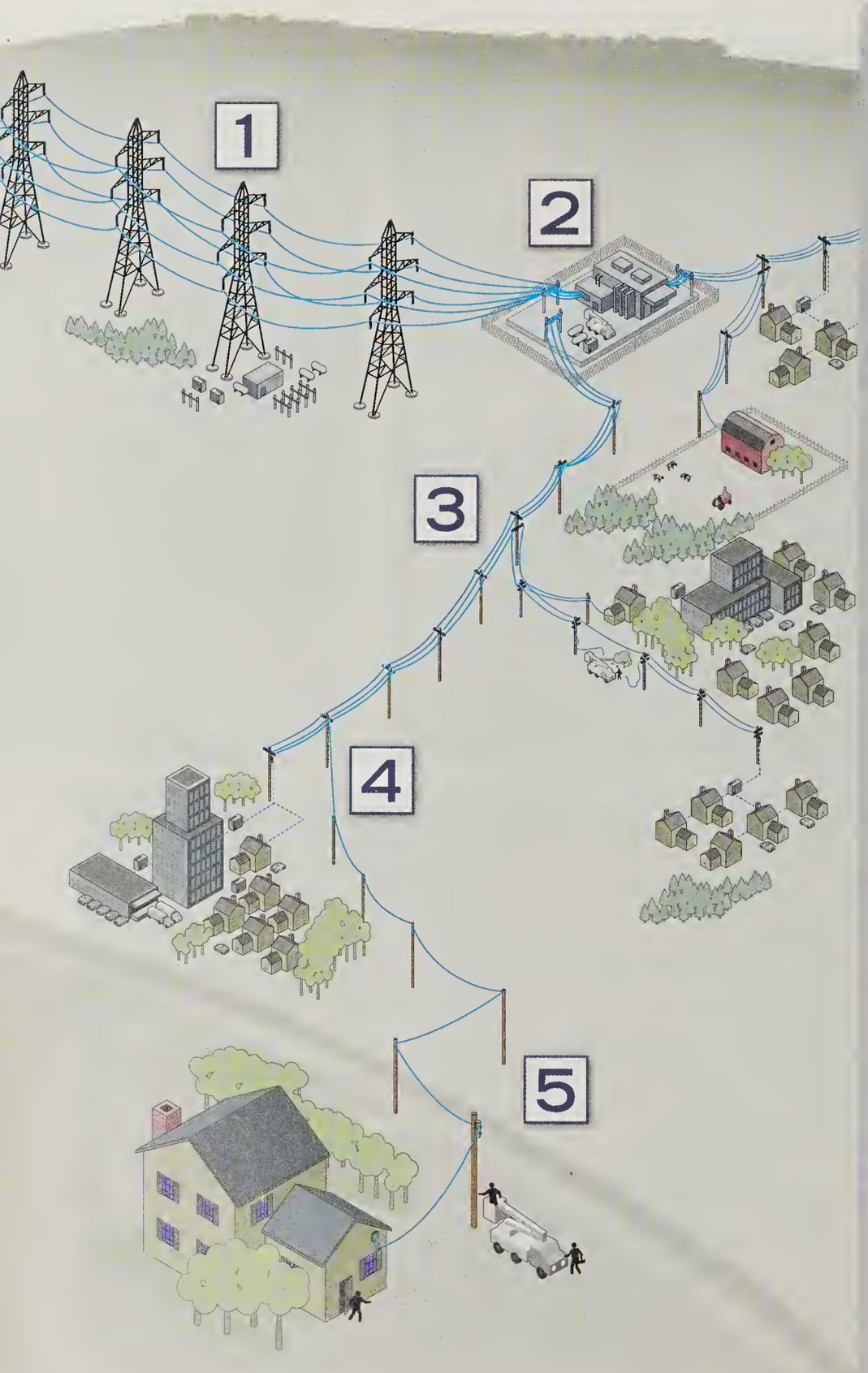


GO ONLINE
See more photos of Boone's November cash mob on our website:
www.carolinacountry.com

Powering UP

When electricity goes out, most of us expect power will be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm causes widespread damage, longer outages may result. Co-op line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of consumers in the shortest time possible.

Here's what's going on if you find yourself in the dark.



1 High-Voltage Transmission Lines

Transmission towers and cables that supply power to transmission substations (and thousands of members) rarely fail. But when damaged, these facilities must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

2 Distribution Substation

Each substation serves hundreds or thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, line crews inspect substations to determine if problems stem from transmission lines feeding into the substation, the substation itself, or if problems exist down the line.

3 Main Distribution Lines

If the problem cannot be isolated at a distribution substation, distribution lines are checked. These lines carry power to large groups of consumers in communities or housing developments.

4 Tap Lines

If local outages persist, supply lines, called tap lines, are inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers, either mounted on poles or placed on pads for underground service, outside businesses, schools and homes.

5 Individual Homes

If your home remains without power, the service line between a transformer and your residence may need to be repaired. Always call to report an outage to help line crews isolate local issues.

graphic by Funnel Inc.

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"Tobacco Auction," the Louisburg, N.C., post office mural by Richard Kenah, painted in 1938.

Post Office Art

Depression-era artwork in U.S. post offices expressed not only local history but also hope

By Marilyn Jones

You can buy stamps and mail parcels at your local post office. The lobbies usually are bustling places where people in a hurry to conduct their business might not notice the wall murals and other artwork, and probably don't realize it might have been executed by an American master if the building dates back to the 1930s or early 40s.

In Lincolnton, for example, there is a mural above the postmaster's office door depicting men thrashing wheat entitled, appropriately, "Threshing Grain." The mural was painted in 1938 by Richard Jansen.

In Louisburg, Richard Kenah painted "Tobacco Auction" in 1938. He also painted post office murals in Bridgeport, Ohio, and Bluefield, W. Va.

The art, and construction of the post offices where the art is displayed, were part of Franklin D. Roosevelt's promise when he accepted the Democratic nomination for president in 1932: "I pledge myself to a new deal for the American people. This is more than a political campaign. It is a call to arms."

George Biddle, a Philadelphia artist, first suggested the idea of commissioning artists to decorate federal buildings. In 1933, a pilot program was created as a New Deal initiative. Because of the pilot's success, project administrators created a unit within the Treasury Department, the Section of Fine Art, which became known simply as "the Section."

Artists were not chosen on the basis of need, but through anonymous competitions. Some were well established with national reputations, such as Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko. Others were young unknowns whose commission provided them with their first public exposure.

The artists were expected to follow an adaptable format —the art was to reflect the town's heritage. To make sure that happened, the artist had to meet with the postmaster and local residents. The Post Office Department's approval then had to be obtained, and finally the plans were submitted for final approval by the Section. The art was meant to provide the average American with a public outlet to view professional art.

From 1934 to 1943, more than 1,300 murals and 300 sculptures were commissioned nationwide. One percent of the funds appropriated for a building project was set aside for these "embellishments."

When touring the state to view New Deal artwork, you'll find positive images—the hard realities of American life during the Depression are not illustrated on post office walls or building exteriors. The artwork offers a snapshot not only of history but also of hope.

Every piece of post office art has its own story: a window into the artistic tastes of the 1930s and '40s, what subject matter residents felt best reflected their community and the artists, their successes before and after the artwork was created for the post office.

A few of the art pieces have disappeared over time, while others are in need of repair. In some cases these masterpieces have been moved from their original locations or the buildings sold.

These treasures are located throughout the state. If you haven't yet visited any of the Depression-era postal facilities, take the time—it's everyone's heritage.

Marilyn Jones is a freelance writer in Texas with an expertise in U.S. Postal Service issues.

North Carolina New Deal Post Office Art

Ahoskie (destroyed), Albemarle (destroyed), Beaufort, Belmont (building now used as Belmont City Hall), Boone, Brevard (moved to Transylvania County Library), Canton, Chapel Hill, Concord (destroyed), Dunn (now Dunn Daily Record office), Eden, Elkin, Forest City, Gastonia, Hamlet, Kings Mountain, Laurinburg, Lincolnton, Louisburg, Madison, Marion (now the Marion Public Library), Mebane (replaced with copy in 1964), Mooresville (now City School office), Morganton, New Bern, Red Springs, Reidsville (now used as City Hall), Roanoke Rapids (missing), Rockingham, Roxboro (moved to Piedmont Technical Institute), Sanford, Siler City, Southern Pines, Statesville Post Office and Courthouse (located in courtroom), Wake Forest, Wallace, Warrenton, Weldon, Whiteville (moved to Southeastern Community College), Williamston and Wilmington.

Fireplace Efficiency

Don't let energy savings go up in smoke

By Kelly Trapnell

Your fireplace creates a warm, cozy atmosphere during wintry weather, but don't let it add unnecessary dollars to your electric bill.

Fireplaces heat the room they're in but at the expense of the rest of the house. Most of the heat in traditional fireplaces goes up the chimney instead of warming living space, and the draft pulls heat from other rooms. So if your thermostat is located away from the fireplace, it will work harder to maintain room temperatures for the rest of the house.

Fireplace "inserts" help boost energy efficiency. However, emissions from old inserts and fireplaces without inserts are up to 20 times worse than using U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-certified wood stoves, pellet stoves, or gas/oil furnaces. So look for an EPA-certified insert if you want to supplement your home's heating.

Contact a local retailer to learn about efficient stoves and inserts that will circulate hot air into a room to help lower heating costs. But keep in mind the disadvantages of using high-maintenance fires as heat sources, including constant attention and ash disposal.

If you don't have an efficient insert but love a crackling fire, follow these measures for safety and improved efficiency.

- **Seal chimney cracks.** While sealing drafts around your home, don't forget to check the chimney. Smoke and heat that escape through cracks can pose a fire hazard. It's best to hire a professional to fix cracks in high-heat areas.
- **Fight the draft.** If you plan on a long-lasting fire, lower the thermostat to save energy—just be prepared to wear a sweater in other rooms.
- **Have it inspected.** Fire protection standards recommend annual chimney and fireplace inspections. Even if you don't use your fireplace much, a chimney sweep can clear possible blockages from animal nests, etc.

Kelly Trapnell

Fires are a low-efficiency, high-maintenance source of heat requiring constant tending and ash removal.

- **Batten down the hatch.** Keep the chimney flue closed when not using your fireplace to prevent conditioned or heated air from escaping.
- **Choose your wood wisely.** Wood that's dried at least six months provides the best heat, so avoid any that's wet or newly chopped. And the harder the tree species, the longer your fire will burn. This makes ironwood, rock elm, hickory, oak, sugar maple and beech good choices. Store wood off the ground and away from your house to remove the threat of termite infestation, and cover the top to lessen moisture but leave the sides open for circulation.

> The harder the wood, the longer it burns, which makes sugar maple, oak and hickory good choices for firewood.

Kelly Trapnell writes on safety and energy efficiency issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

Sources: U.S. Department of Energy, Consumer Reports, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Chimney Safety Institute of America

Take charge of your financial health

Make a New Year's resolution to organize and protect your records

Stress over financial matters can affect both your health and your family's well-being. For this new year, resolve to reduce stress by following these tips.

Safely store these documents

Over time, you accumulate all sorts of important papers from medical histories to bills and insurance information. It's a good idea to keep these important documents in a safe place, such as a safety deposit box or fire-proof strong box. Here are items you'll want to store safely and be able to retrieve quickly:

- Insurance plan information – life, health, dental, home owners, renters, auto, boat, etc.
- Mortgage information.
- Tax information — returns, purchase and charitable contribution receipts.
- Investment paperwork — savings, stocks, bonds and retirement records.
- Will and trust or health care directives.

Tracking monthly expenses helps you know where your money is going, and where you can cut back if needed.

How long do you keep paperwork?

Keep ATM receipts for a month, and paycheck stubs, bills, credit card, bank and investment statements for a year. Hold on to tax returns, medical bills, mortgage and home records longer (three to seven years).

Set a monthly budget

It's important to keep track of your finances and what you're spending money on in order to determine where you can cut back. Keep an accurate account of your finances for several months, then start trimming expenses where possible. There are excellent software packages available to help you keep your income and expenses balanced.

A savings budget

Whether it's for your children's college tuition, a home down payment or for retirement, it's important to make your savings goal part of your monthly budget. Set aside a regular amount, even if it's only $20 a month — starting as early as you can.

Keep an emergency fund

Financial emergencies can happen when you least expect them. Instead of adding to your debt through a credit card withdrawal or bank loan, keep an amount equal to six months expenses on hand. Get started by arranging a bi-weekly or monthly automatic transfer into your savings account.

Life insurance

If the unexpected happens, you want to know your family is safe, and that includes your finances. Foresters is among life insurance organizations that offer a range of member benefits that support overall family well-being sold by independent agents in North Carolina. It suggests asking a life insurance professional for help in selecting the coverage best suited for your family circumstances.

Check your credit score

Good credit opens many doors — auto and home ownership, backup credit lines, even co-signing your child's student loans can be influenced by your credit score.

—Family Features.com

How to get your free credit report

The three nationwide consumer reporting companies, Equifax, TransUnion and Experion, have set up a central website, a toll-free telephone number, and a mailing address through which you can order your free annual report. To order your report, visit www.annualcreditreport.com, call 1-877-322-8228, or complete the Annual Credit Report Request Form found at www.ftc.gov/credit and mail it to: Annual Credit Report Request Service, P.O. Box 105281, Atlanta, G.A., 30348-5281. (This website is the only official site authorized to fill orders for the free annual credit report you are entitled to by law. Other websites with claims for "free credit reports" or "free credit monitoring" are not part of the legally mandated program, and their "free" product may come with strings attached.)

Clearing out your closet clutter

Make a New Year's resolution to get organized

When it comes to getting the house clean and tidy, closets often get left off the to-do list. But from hall closets and linen closets to bedroom closets, "out of sight, out of mind" thinking quickly leads to clutter and frustration when you can't find items.

A little planning can help you get your closets in user-friendly shape for the new year. Here are some tips:

Put your closets on your calendar

Commit some time to tackle your closets. Set realistic expectations—you don't have to conquer all them at once. It may make sense for your family to forego TV one evening a week and focus on one closet at a time, for example.

Sorting items

If you haven't worn a piece of clothing in the past year—or you can't remember the last time you wore something—then you don't probably need it. Other items to purge from your closet: children's clothes and shoes that are either too small or too worn out to pass down to a sibling or a friend.

Sort your remaining clothes by season and then into piles to keep or pass down. If you have limited closet space, keep only the current season's wardrobe in your closet. Pack and store the rest for later. Linen closets stay more organized when you stack similar sized items together. Sort sheets by size, and group washcloths, hand towels and bath towels together.

For closets that hold everything from the vacuum cleaner to art supplies and anything in between, work one shelf at a time. Sort items by categories and dedicate one shelf or area of the closet to each group.

Green storage

Instead of buying new containers to hold things, look around the house for boxes and containers you already have. Baskets, crates and empty shoeboxes can be reused to keep your closets more organized.

Maintenance

As with most household chores, a little maintenance will keep your closets looking neat and clean. Keep a bag, box or bag in each of your kids' closets as well as your own to set aside gently used and outgrown items on a regular basis.

—Family Features.com

Getty Images

Easy ways to donate your goods

Donating your unwanted items benefits those in need and reduces waste. Organizations are making it easier to donate these days, too. Some websites list local charities that will pick up goods at your door, based on your locale. For example, if you put in the Asheboro zip code 27203 at www.donationtown.org it lists Habitat for Humanity of Randolph County, Teen Challenge, The Salvation Army and Vietnam Veterans of America.

You can even schedule pickup online. At DonateStuff.com, you can request pre-paid UPS shipping bags that make it simple and free to send in unwanted clothes, shoes, accessories and linens. Your donation benefits one of three national nonprofits of your choosing: AMVETS, Easter Seals, or The Purple Heart. Don't forget about contacting local nonprofits and churches, too.

Cyber security

What you can do to protect your computer and your privacy

Hackers and new computer viruses seem to be in the news more frequently, along with regular warnings to update your virus protection and protect your privacy. The task of keeping your computer safe can seem overwhelming. So, what can you do to safeguard access to your computer and to protect yourself and your family from cyber intrusion?

Know the terminology

The first step is to recognize the risks and become familiar with some terminology. Hackers, attackers or intruders are terms applied to the people who seek to exploit weaknesses in software and computer systems for their own gain. Their actions can range from mischief (creating a virus with no intentionally negative impact) to malicious (stealing or altering information).

Malicious code includes code such as viruses, worms and Trojan horses. Although some people use these terms interchangeably, they have unique characteristics:

- **Viruses**—This type of malicious code requires you to actually do something before it infects your computer. This action could be opening an e-mail attachment or going to a particular Web page.
- **Worms**—Worms propagate without you doing anything. They typically start by exploiting a software vulnerability (a flaw that allows the software's intended security policy to be violated). Then once the victim computer has been infected, the worm will attempt to find and infect other computers. Similar to viruses, worms can propagate via e-mail, websites or network-based software. The automated self-propagation of worms distinguishes them from viruses.
- **Trojan horses**—A Trojan horse program is software that claims to do one thing while, in fact, doing something different behind the scenes. For example, a program that claims it will speed up your computer may actually be sending your confidential information to an intruder.
- **Spyware**—This sneaky software rides its way onto computers when you download screensavers, games, music and other applications. Spyware sends information about what you're doing on the Internet to a third-party, usually to target you with pop-up ads.

Minimize access to your information

As long as you have a computer and connect it to a network or the Internet, you are vulnerable to someone or something else remotely accessing or corrupting your information. Here are some tips to make it more difficult for someone to do this:

- Lock or log-off your computer when you are away from it. This prevents another person from then sitting down at your computer and accessing all of your information.
- To be really secure, disconnect your computer from the Internet when you aren't using it. The likelihood that attackers or viruses scanning the network for available computers will target your computer becomes much higher if your computer is always connected.
- Evaluate your security settings. Many, but not all Internet providers offer free security software. If you don't receive free software, you should consider buying a commercial product that includes virus scan, firewall and pop-up blockers. You should also be aware of your Internet cookies setting. Cookies are short pieces of data used by Web servers to identify users. Some cookies are useful for storing images and data from websites that you frequent, but others are malicious and collect information about you. You'll have to decide how much risk from cookies you can accept.
- Browsers enable you to block pop-up ads. You can also install anti-spyware to block them.
- Look for signals that you are using a secure web page. A secure site encrypts or scrambles personal information so it cannot be easily intercepted. Signals include a screen notice that says you are on a secure site, a closed lock or unbroken key in the bottom corner of your screen, or having the first letters of the Internet address you are viewing change from "http" to "https."

Source: www.usa.gov

NC and identity theft

Protecting your information online helps you prevent identity theft. Identity theft is a felony under North Carolina law. If you are a victim, you will need to report the crime to your local police department, and, if known, the police department in the location where your identity was used illegally. There's an ID theft victim toolkit on the North Carolina Department of Justice's website. Visit www.ncdoj.gov to learn more.

WHERE IN CAROLINA COUNTRY IS THIS?

This is a Carolina Country scene in Touchstone Energy territory. If you know where it is, send your answer by Jan. 9 with your name, address and the name of your electric cooperative.

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Or by mail: Where in Carolina Country?
P.O. Box 27306
Raleigh, NC 27611

Online: www.carolinacountry.com

Multiple entries from the same person will be disqualified.

The winner, chosen at random and announced in our February issue, will receive $25. To see the answer before you get your February magazine, go to "Where Is This?" on our website www.carolinacountry.com

December winner

The December picture was sent in by James Tillman Jr. and shows a building about seven miles east of Lilesville in east Anson County near Blewett Falls Lake. Mr. Tillman said the building was at the Blewett Falls Hydro Plant before it was moved here and made into Clark Brothers Groceries, operated by George and Jaspar Clark. The winning entry, chosen at random from all correct submissions, was from Juliet Richardson of Albemarle, a member of Pee Dee EMC.

Drawing water from the well

While growing up on a farm in Catawba County in the 1940s and 1950s, we had a well located about 50 feet from our front porch. Suspended on a pulley above a wooden well house was a chain with a metal bucket fastened on each end. When an empty bucket was lowered into the water, a full bucket of water was pulled up. As I grew tall enough to reach the top bucket, I was expected to do my share of drawing water. We drew many buckets of water on wash days, bath days and canning days. It was hard work, and I always dreaded it, especially when my hands got stuck on the ice-coated chain. I learned the hard way to wear gloves on freezing winter days.

On summer days, my hands burned on the hot chain. Sometimes the chain would break, causing the full bucket to drop back into the water. Also, with kids around, other objects were "accidentally" dropped into the open well and had to be removed. Armed with "grabber" hooks, and a mirror for reflection, dad patiently worked until the bucket or object was brought up from the water. How I envied the neighbors who had hand pumps to pump water from their wells.

As much as I disliked drawing all that water, I would very much like to stand before that defunct well today and draw up just one more bucket.

Joyce Keever, Statesville, EnergyUnited

SEND US YOUR *Memories*

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Guidelines:

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6. Include your name, mailing address and the name of your electric cooperative.
7. **E-mail:** iremember@carolinacountry.com **Or by U.S. mail:** I Remember, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616

The old Christmas coat

I was married to Alfred Burton on Jan. 6, 1955. Alfred gave me this Mouton coat on Dec. 25, 1955 for Christmas. The more recent photo shows me just before going to church on Jan. 29, 2012. Everybody said it was almost unbelievable that I had had the coat that long.

Betty Jo Burton, Elkin, Surry Yadkin EMC

The Strip Down

I moved from Orlando, Fla., to Moore County in June 1952. My husband was from here and graduated from Elise High School in 1948. He enlisted in the Army for three years. The Korean War broke out, and he had to stay an extra year in service. The last six months of his service was spent at the Army base in Orlando. That is where we met and fell in love. I was a junior in high school. My mom made me promise to get married in my church and finish high school, which I did. I graduated from Elise High School in 1953.

The world I came to in Moore County was so different from the one I left. I had never seen snow, knew nothing about killing hogs, making homemade sausage, planting a garden, canning, planting tobacco, or chicken houses.

The Strip Down was the vehicle we used to haul drums of water from the spring for the chickens. (We did not use water from the well for fear it might go dry.) My sister-in-law and I learned to drive on the Strip Down. She and I were the same age. Her birthday was May 19 and mine was May 29.

I am sure my new family felt like they had another daughter. They are all gone now. My husband passed away eight years ago. Had he lived we would have been married 60 years this past April 10. Today I live on 31½ acres. I have 175 grape vines that I take care of and 10 acres that I mow and many, many memories.

I learned to drive on the Strip Down.

Betty Hooker, Carthage, Randolph EMC

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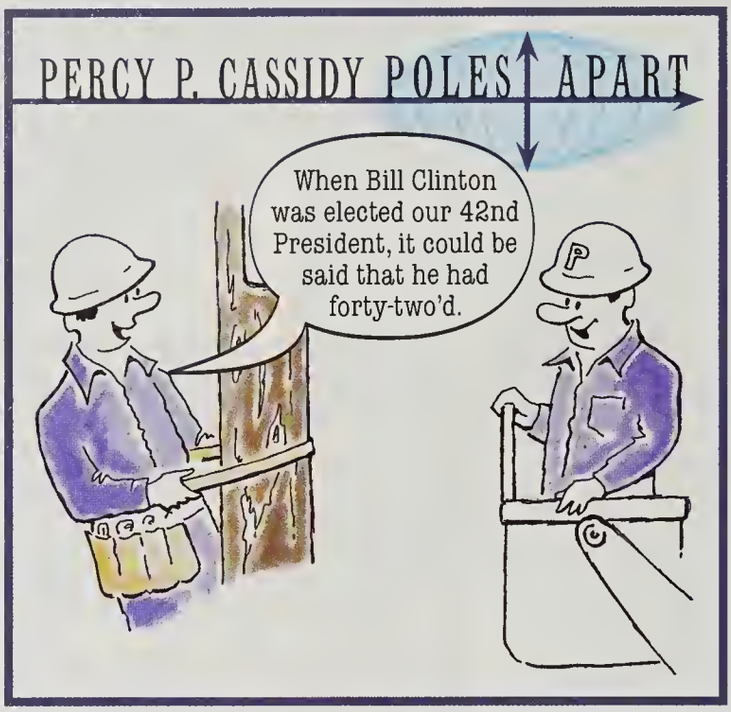

SAYIN'S

After looking through my copy of "You Know You're From Carolina Country If . . . ," my mind is full of "sayin's" I heard as a boy from my folks. I haven't heard some of these in a coon's age, or since Hector was a pup.

"Let's squat that rabbit" means "leave it lay."

"As long as Pat stayed in the army" means not more than a skinny minute.

"Shoot, Luke, or give up the gun" means get off the pot.

"Slow as Moses" is the opposite of two shakes of a lamb's tail, but close to "'til the cows come home."

U.S. PRESIDENTS

Each of the 43 men who have been President of the United States has a place of his own in this puzzle. Can you put them in their places? Careful! One mistake will lead to another.

ARTHUR
BUCHANAN
BUSH
CLINTON
ADAMS
CLEVELAND
CARTER
COOLIDGE
BUSH
HARDING
ADAMS
JEFFERSON
HOOVER
FILLMORE
FORD
JACKSON
GRANT
ROOSEVELT
MONROE
GARFIELD
POLK
JOHNSON
HAYES
ROOSEVELT
PIERCE
HARRISON
TAFT
JOHNSON
NIXON
REAGAN
HARRISON
KENNEDY
OBAMA
EISENHOWER
TAYLOR
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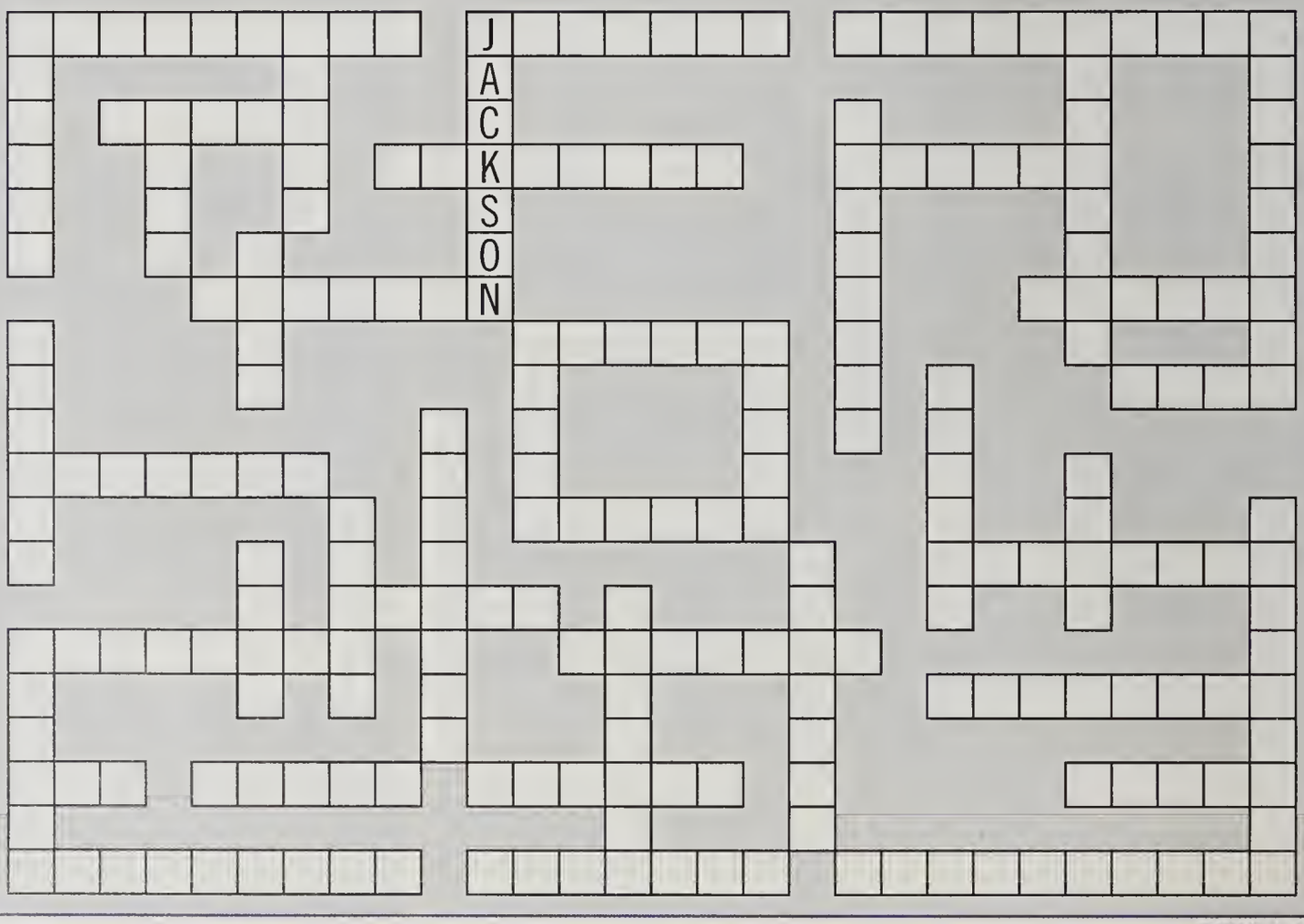
LINCOLN
TYLER
WASHINGTON
TRUMAN
VAN BUREN
MADISON
WILSON

For answer, please see page 33



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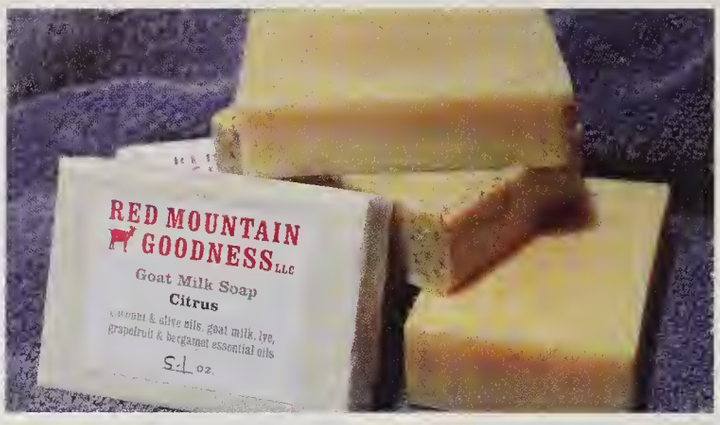


Red Mountain Goodness soaps

Red Mountain Goodness handcrafts its soaps using natural, local goat milk as well as pure coconut and olive oils and high quality essential oils. Owner Todd Hinson, who is a Piedmont EMC member, began making soap to help ease his wife's dry wintertime skin. After positive feedback from family and friends who used his soaps, the former research scientist went into commercial soap production from the couple's Rougemont home. The Red Mountain Goodness product line includes citrus, Australian tea tree, oatmeal, peppermint, bay and rum and French lavender soaps, and each 5-ounce bar sells for $7.50. The company also sells a 2.75-ounce shampoo bar (lavender and rosemary versions) for $4.50. Gift baskets for $32 are also available.

(919) 381-8131
www.redmountaingoodness.com

Live and Lively

The New North Carolina Ramblers have long amazed their audiences with unfamiliar songs played with unexpected instruments, while staying true to their deep roots in old-time rural music. "Live & Lively" features a mix of energetic tunes, including two live tracks recorded during the New North Carolina Ramblers' concert at the Heritage Hall of Old Time Music stage in Mount Airy. Other tracks include Don't Let Your Deal Go Down Blues, Alabama Gals, Texas Gals, Round Town Gals, Hickman Rag, Weary Prodigal Son, Sandy River Belle and The Letter That Never Came. Recorded by Old Blue Records. CD is $13.97 and MP3 is $9.99.

(540) 745-2001
www.cdbaby.com

Carolina Country Store features interesting, useful products, services, travel sites, handicrafts, food, books, CDs and DVDs that relate to North Carolina. To submit an item for possible publication, e-mail editor@carolinacountry.com with a description and clear, color pictures. Or you can submit by mail: Country Store, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC, 27616. Those who submit must be able to handle mail orders.

on the bookshelf

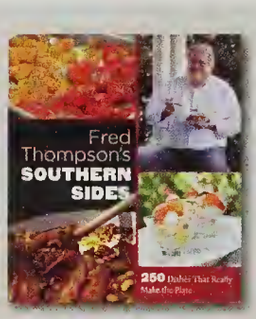
The Definitive Andy Griffith Show Reference

THE DEFINITIVE ANDY GRIFFITH SHOW REFERENCE
Episode-by-Episode, with Cast and Production Biographies and a Guide to Collectibles
DALE ROBINSON and DAVID FERNANDES

From the time it officially debuted in 1960, this beloved TV show was a perennial favorite. The CBS show finished its eight-year run as the top-rated show on television and produced some of the most remembered characters in TV history, including the wise sheriff Andy Taylor, hapless deputy Barney and no-nonsense Aunt Bee. This guide fully details each of the show's 249 episodes, including air dates, cast and production personnel, guest stars, and special facts. Brief biographies of the show's major stars, producers, directors and writers are also included, as is a guide to collectibles. The 1986 television movie "Return to Mayberry" is also covered in detail. Dale Robinson co-authored the book with the late David Fernandes. Published by McFarland in Jefferson. Softcover, 328 pages, $39.95.

(800) 253-2187
www.mcfarlandbooks.com

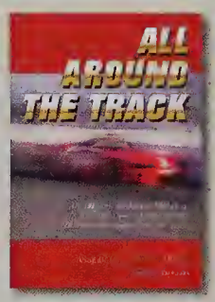
Southern Sides



From red beans and rice to scuppernong-glazed carrots, travel and food writer Fred Thompson has written a heartfelt love letter to the power of side dishes. Thompson's 250 recipes recommend the virtues of utterly simple, yet surprising, food. Twelve chapters, richly illustrated in color, feature an array of produce, grains and beans, fish and meats and are enhanced by Thompson's humorous observations and southern tales. Recipes include Fennel Hash, Grilled Okra, White Acre Pea Salad and Beer-Braised Cabbage. Straightforward cooking tips are also provided by Thompson, who divides his time between Raleigh and New York City. The book also offers menus for special occasions throughout the year. For example, Asparagus Frites is suggested for Easter. "Fred Thompson's Southern Sides" is published by the University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill. Hardback, 334 pages, $35.

(800) 848-6224
www.uncpress.unc.edu

All Around The Track



One of the big appeals of auto racing is its array of colorful and engaging characters. "All Around The Track" pays homage to this dynamic sport by presenting in print the oral histories of more than 50 individuals from stock car and drag racing's past and present. Rich with original interviews and previously unpublished material, it includes famed drivers such as David Pearson, Junior Johnson, Bobby Allison, Bob Glidden and Hubert Platt, along with mechanics and builders, track crew, sportswriters, and owners such as Joe and J.D. Gibbs. The book, co-written by Anne B. Jones and Rex White, includes 62 black and white photographs and a foreword by Atlanta Motor Speedway president Ed Clark. Published by McFarland in Jefferson. Softcover, 244 pages, $35.

(800) 253-2187
www.mcfarlandbooks.com

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January Events

Mountains (west of I-77)

First Day Hikes
Jan. 1, Chimney Rock
(800) 277-9611
www.chimneyrockpark.com

New Year's Polar Plunge
Jan. 1, Lake Lure
(828) 287-6113
www.rutherfordtourism.com

The Perrys In Concert
Jan. 17, Rutherfordton
(828) 287-6113
www.carolinagospel.com

Lunch With Author Mark De Castrique
Jan. 24, Lake Lure
(828) 625-2525
www.lakelure.com

Winterfest
Music, hayrides, ice carving demos
Jan. 24–27, Blowing Rock
(818) 295-7851
www.blowingrockwinterfest.com

Quilting & Needle Art
Jan. 25–26, Statesville
(704) 376-2531
www.quiltersgallery.net

Symphony Of Rutherford County
Winter concert
Jan. 27, Spindale
(828) 287-6113
www.rcsymphony.org

ONGOING

Street Dance
Monday nights, Hendersonville
(828) 693-9708
www.historichendersonville.org

Guided Tours
Wednesday through Saturdays, Marion
(828) 724-4948
www.historiccarsonhouse.com

Bluegrass Music Jam
Thursdays, Marion
(828) 652-2215

Alleghany Jubilee
Tues. & Sat. nights
Through Dec. 28, 2013
Sparta
(336) 372-4591
http://alleghanyjubilee.com

Piedmont (between I-77 & I-95)

Preschool Drama Hour
With Peter Holland
Jan. 3, Mount Airy
(336) 786-7998
www.surryarts.org

Paint The Night Away
Adult class with Lizzie Morrison
Jan. 4, Mount Airy
(336) 786-7998
www.surryarts.org

Breaking Up Christmas JAM
Dance at Historic Earle Theatre
Jan. 5, Mount Airy
(336) 786-7998
www.surryarts.org

Picturing Our People
Photographer José Galvez
Jan. 6, Raleigh
(919) 807-7943
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

Auditions For Welcome To Mitford
Jan. 12, Mount Airy
(336) 786-7998
www.surryarts.org

Ironing Board Sam
Blues, classics & R&B
Jan. 13, Raleigh
(919) 807-7943
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

Happy Feet 2 Movie
Jan. 17, Mount Airy
(336) 786-7998
www.surryarts.org

Young At Art Club
With Kayla Ellis
Jan. 18, Mount Airy
(336) 786-7998
www.surryarts.org

On Sunday, Jan. 13, catch a performance by master showman Ironing Board Sam, a blues and R&B singer, songwriter and piano player who will perform at the North Carolina Museum of History in Raleigh. (919) 807-7943 or www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

Music For Charity Series
Jan. 18, Fayetteville
(910) 232-2410
www.stpatnc.org

Voice Of Blue Ridge Music Fest
Includes Robert Tilley & The Hard Times
Jan. 19, Mount Airy
(336) 786-7998
www.surryarts.org

Styx Concert
Community Concerts Series
Jan. 19, Fayetteville
(910) 323-1991
www.community-concerts.com

Manning Chamber Music
Jan. 21, Raleigh
(919) 508-2043
www.peace.edu/events

Bob Zellner
Distinguished Speaker Series
Jan. 22, Fayetteville
(910) 672-2101
www.uncfsu.edu

Legally Blonde
Musical comedy
Jan. 24, Fayetteville
(910) 323-4233
www.cfrt.org

Civil War Quiz Bowl
Jan. 24, Fayetteville
(910) 486-1330

Singles Party
Jan. 25, Cornelius
(704) 500-9305

Monster X Tour
Jan. 25–26, Fayetteville
(910) 438-4100
www.atthecrown.com

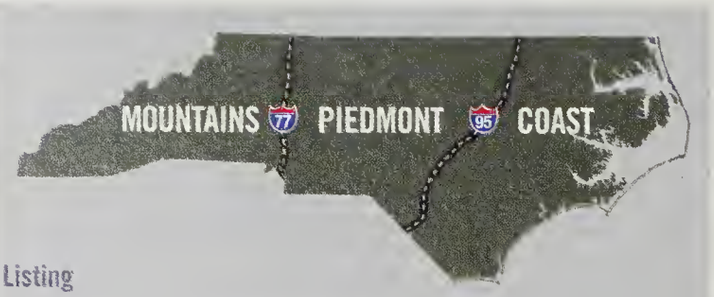
Karen Peck & New River Concert
Jan. 26, Albemarle
(704) 985-8303

African American Cultural Celebration
Music, reenactments, storytelling
Jan. 26, Raleigh
(919) 807-7943
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

ONGOING

Maness Pottery & Music Barn
Dinner, music, fellowship
Tuesday nights, Midway
(910) 948-4897
www.liveatclydes.com

Durham Civil War Roundtable
Third Thursdays, Durham
(919) 643-0466



Listing

Deadlines:
For March: Jan. 25
For April: Feb. 25

Submit Listings Online:
Visit www.carolinacountry.com and click "Carolina Adventures" to add your event to the magazine and/or our website. Or e-mail events@carolinacountry.com.

Art After Hours
Second Fridays, Wake Forest
(919) 570-0765
www.sunflowerstudiowf.com

Betty Lynn (Thelma Lou)
Appearance at Andy Griffith Museum
Third Fridays, Mount Airy
(336) 786-7998
www.visitmayberry.com

Arts Councils' Fourth Friday
Fayetteville
(910) 483-5311
www.theartscouncil.org

Poe House Victorian Christmas
Through Jan. 6, Fayetteville
(910) 486-1330
www.museumofthecapefear.ncdcr.gov

Life As We Know It
Comedic plays
Through Jan. 6, Fayetteville
(910) 678-7186
www.gilberttheater.com

Season Of Light
Planetarium holiday show
Children's Museum & Science Center
Through Jan. 6, Rocky Mount
(252) 972-1167
http://museum.imperialcentre.org

Winter Show
NC artists exhibition
Through Jan. 13, Greensboro
(336) 333-7460
www.greenhillcenter.org

Student Art
Through Jan. 31, Marshville
(704) 624-2602

Al Norte al Norte: Latino Life in North Carolina
Through April 28, 2013, Raleigh
Prize–winning photographer's images
(919) 807-7900
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

Civil War traveling exhibit (Eastern Region)
Jan. 2–Jan. 29, Louisburg
(919) 496-2111
www.nccivilwar150.com

Civil War traveling exhibit (Eastern Region)
Jan. 2–Jan. 29, Rockingham
(910) 997-3388
www.nccivilwar150.com

The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the Moon Marigold
Drama about widow and daughters
Jan. 31–Feb. 13, Fayetteville
(910) 678-7186
www.gilberttheater.com

Coast (east of I-95)

Dolphin Dip
Jan. 1, Surf City
(910) 259-1278
www.dolphindip.net

Twelfth Night With The Stanlys
Reservations required, Tryon Palace
Jan. 5, New Bern
(252) 639-3524

Gathering Time Concerts
Three-part harmony trio
Jan. 11–12, New Bern
(252) 646-4657
www.downeastfolkarts.org

The 39 Steps
Comedy whodunit
Jan. 11–12 & 18–19, New Bern
(252) 633-0567
www.newberncivictheatre.org

Hidden Battleship
Behind the scenes tour
Jan. 12, Wilmington
(910) 251-5797
www.battleshipnc.com

"3-Day Weekend" & "Cold Biscuit"
Dinner, music & dancing fundraiser
Jan. 18, New Bern
(252) 637-9400
www.visitnewbern.com

Teacher & Student Art Show
Jan. 18, Edenton
(252) 482-8005
www.chowanarts.com

Amy Grant In Concert
Jan. 18, Hamlet
(910) 410-1691
www.richmondcc.edu

Decoy & Waterfowl Festival
Jan. 19–20, Mattamuskeet
(252) 714-1635
www.hydewaterfowl.com

Martin Luther King Celebration
Speakers at Swain Auditorium
Jan. 21, Edenton
(252) 482-7352
www.visitedenton.com

New Century Chamber Orchestra
Nadja Salerno-Sonnenbery
Jan. 24, Greenville
1-800-ECU-ARTS
www.ecu.edu

ONGOING

Art Walk
First Friday, Elizabeth City
(252) 335-5330
http://ecncart.com

Art Walk
First Friday, Greenville
(252) 329-4200
www.uptowngreenville.com

OBXmas Weekends
Holiday shopping events
Through Jan 6, Outer Banks
(252) 473-2138
www.obxmasweekends.com

Breaking Up Christmas is a Blue Ridge Mountain tradition of celebrating mountain music shortly after Christmas. Join in the free dance-filled celebration at The Historic Earle Theatre on Saturday, January 5, at 7 p.m. (336) 786-7998 or www.surryarts.org

The 12th Annual African American Cultural Celebration on Saturday, Jan. 26, will include hands-on activities, as well as music and storytelling. For example, visitors can help sew a quilt with members of quilting groups. The celebration will be held at the North Carolina Museum of History in Raleigh. (919) 807-7943 or www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

CAROLINA COUNTRY adventures

Day Trip

Wake Forest

Top: Stroll N. Main Street to see grand houses.

Middle: Campus of the Southeastern Baptist Thological Seminary

Bottom: Shop for gifts at The Cotton Company.

Wake Forest originally began in 1834, not as a Wake County town, but as a college to train young men and boys for ministry. Merchant businesses followed and Wake Forest was chartered as a town in 1909. After World War II, the Reynolds family of Winston-Salem offered to sustain the college financially if it were moved to their city. Wake Forest College (now Wake Forest University) opened in Winston-Salem in 1956, and the Wake Forest campus became **Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary**.

The seminary continues to provide an atmosphere of spiritual growth and visitors are free to saunter through its peaceful campus. Nearby, grand old houses also lay claim to the town's history—a stroll down N. Main Street and N. College Street reveals Italianate-style, Victorian and Colonial, Greek and Georgian Revival architecture.

The Historical District's business section, newly freshened through the town's Renaissance Plan, has retained its heritage feel while growing in commerce. Shops and art galleries are housed in vintage buildings updated for modern times and clustered along a few easy blocks, mostly along White Street or nearby side streets. For **antiques**, there's Old Magnolia, Red Door and For Old Times Sake (go upstairs—it recently expanded). If you like retro, especially 1950s–1970s, walk also to GC5. It's closing Jan. 31, although it will continue to sell its funky finds online. You can rediscover books at **The Storyteller's Book Store** and buy grilling sauces and fresh peanuts at the **North Carolina Specialty Store**.

For unique gifts, choices include the **Lemon Tree Shop and Café**, as well as **The Cotton Company**. This multivendor, artisan marketplace, housed in a former cotton warehouse, displays an upscale décor, jewelry and other finds (5,000 square feet. on the ground floor).

Grab a hot dog at the bustling, venerable **Shorty's** or savor a cucumber and cream cheese sandwich at **Olde English Tea Room**. Or walk a block over to Brooks Street for cold cut heroes at **La Foresta Italian Café & Pizzeria** and real banana pudding at **The Forks Cafeteria**. Also on Brooks: a plaza with a cheerfully decorated bowling alley, sit-down deli and vintage car showroom. Owner Charlie Kaleel keeps between about 45 to 60 cars on consignment there at **Southern Classic Cars**, along with old-time gasoline pumps and rare Coke memorabilia.

Two welcome additions to White Street: **Twisted Vine** (wine and beers) and **White Street Brewing Company**. The brewery doesn't serve food, but it's OK to bring in take-out food as you sample its flavorful ales and lagers.

It's important to know that a couple of miles from downtown out on South Main Street (also called US-1 Alt) is a suburban area brimming with chain and local restaurants and stores. Parents and kids also enjoy **The Factory** there, a mammoth, one-stop sports and entertainment complex with go-karts and mini golf (outdoors) and soccer, ice skating and custom inflatable areas (indoors). It also has an indoor/outdoor skatepark, stores and tempting eateries. Locals also swear by the seafood at **Shuckers** out on Rogers Road and the handmade concoctions at **Lumpy's Ice Cream** on East Wait Avenue.

Popular events include **Six Sundays in Spring** (amphitheater concerts that start in April at E. Carroll Joyner Park); **Meet in the Streets** (May), featuring children's activities, arts and crafts, food, live music; and **historic home tours** (December). **Art After Hours** is held each month on second Friday nights downtown, offering free horse-drawn carriage rides, art performances, music, and shop refreshments. There's also a year-round **farmers market** held behind CVS (reduced hours on Saturday mornings in the winter).

—Karen Olson House

(919) 435-9400
www.wakeforestnc.gov/visitors.aspx
www.wakeforestfarmersmarket.org

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Loose Saggy Neck Skin - Can Any Cream Cure Turkey Neck?

DEAR DORRIS: I'm a woman who is 64 years young who suffers from really loose skin under my chin and on my lower neck. I hate the term, but my grandkids say I have "turkey neck" and frankly, I've had enough of it!

I have tried some creams designed to help tighten and firm that loose, saggy skin, but they did not work. Is there any cream out there that can truly help my loose neck skin?

Turkey Neck, Cary, NC

DEAR TURKEY-NECK: In fact, there is a very potent cream on the market that firms, tightens and regenerates new skin cells on the neck area. It is called the **Dermagist Neck Restoration Cream®.** This cream contains an instant lift ingredient that tightens the skin naturally, as well as deep moisturizing ingredients to firm the skin and make it more supple. Amazingly, the **Dermagist Neck Restoration Cream®** also has Stem Cells taken from Malus Domesticus, a special apple from Switzerland.

These stem cells are actually unprogrammed cells that can mimic those of young skin that stays tight, firm and wrinkle free. As an alternative to the scary surgeries or face lifts that many people resort to, this cream really packs a big punch on the loose saggy skin of the neck.

The Dermagist Neck Restoration Cream® is available online at **Dermagist.com** or you can order or learn more by calling toll-free, **888-771-5355.** Oh, I almost forgot... I was given a promo code when I placed my order that gave me **11% off.** The code was "NCN7. It's worth a try to see if it still work.

By Hannah McKenzie

Warm-up home improvements

Q: I see a lot of advertisements for windows, insulation and gadgets that are going to make my home warmer and more energy efficient in the winter. How do I know where to start and what really works?

A: There are many choices when it comes to making your home more comfortable and energy efficient. You have to choose what works best based on your home's needs and your budget. You can hire a home performance contractor to assess and improve your home, or you can incrementally do the improvements yourself. There are three general areas that you should focus on.

1. HVAC duct sealing

A study by Advanced Energy in the 1990s revealed that most homes in North Carolina lose about 20 percent of conditioned air from duct leakage. That means for every $5 you spend to heat your home, $1 heats the great outdoors. I imagine my attic mice are grateful for the years I kept their home cozy.

Ducts are the flexible plastic or rigid metal chases that carry conditioned air from your HVAC unit to the interior of your home. If ducts are located in unconditioned spaces, like the crawlspace or attic, they should also be insulated.

Duct sealing is most often addressed by an HVAC professional or a home performance contractor. If you want to do the work, duct leakage can be assessed by looking for bucket mastic applied to the duct connections. Mastic is a sealant sold in buckets that has the consistency of peanut butter. It can be applied using a cheap paint brush or disposable gloves. You should also caulk the gaps where the metal supply and return boots meet the floor, wall or ceiling.

2. Air sealing and insulation

Insulation is what most homeowners think is going to make their home more comfortable; however, insulation only works if installed after thorough air sealing. Insulation won't stop heated air from rising into your attic. Air sealing all holes, gaps and chases with appropriate caulk or spray foam will stop air flow.

In North Carolina, air sealing and insulation improvements should take priority in your attic, then floors and walls last.

Home performance contractors have the experience to find critical locations that need air sealing. If you are determined to do the work yourself, FineHomebuilding.com has an excellent video series "How to Air-Seal an Attic."

You can also use snow to know where to air seal in the attic. Even when my chimney is not in use, snow does not collect around it. The snow is melted from the heat sneaking up the chimney through the broken damper and behind the crown molding that hides a large gap between the brick and ceiling. Another prime location to investigate is the attic access panel. It should be weather stripped and insulated to create a tight seal that separates your attic from your home. Otherwise heat easily leaks into the attic.

3. Windows

Replacement windows are one of the most advertised energy efficiency items. Beware that many claims for energy savings are false or misleading. Typical replacement windows can take 30 years for the energy savings to pay for the cost of the window.

Replacing a single pane window can have a big impact on comfort, especially if the window is right next to your bed or easy chair. If you're replacing a window for comfort or aesthetic reasons, it's definitely worth it to pay for an Energy Star-labeled window.

If your windows aren't a major source of discomfort, you'll be better off improving your existing windows by repairing and weatherizing your windows. Minimize air leakage by replacing latches and broken glass, repairing glazing putty, and installing weather stripping at sash joints. If you have single pane windows, install storm windows. This is an inexpensive way to keep historic single pane windows, minimize drafts and eliminate condensation. Remember that storm windows only work when you keep them closed.

Don't be overwhelmed by the task of making your home warmer. I've enjoyed incremental improvements in my comfort and power bills over the years. Decide what's important, affordable and feasible and take one bite at a time.

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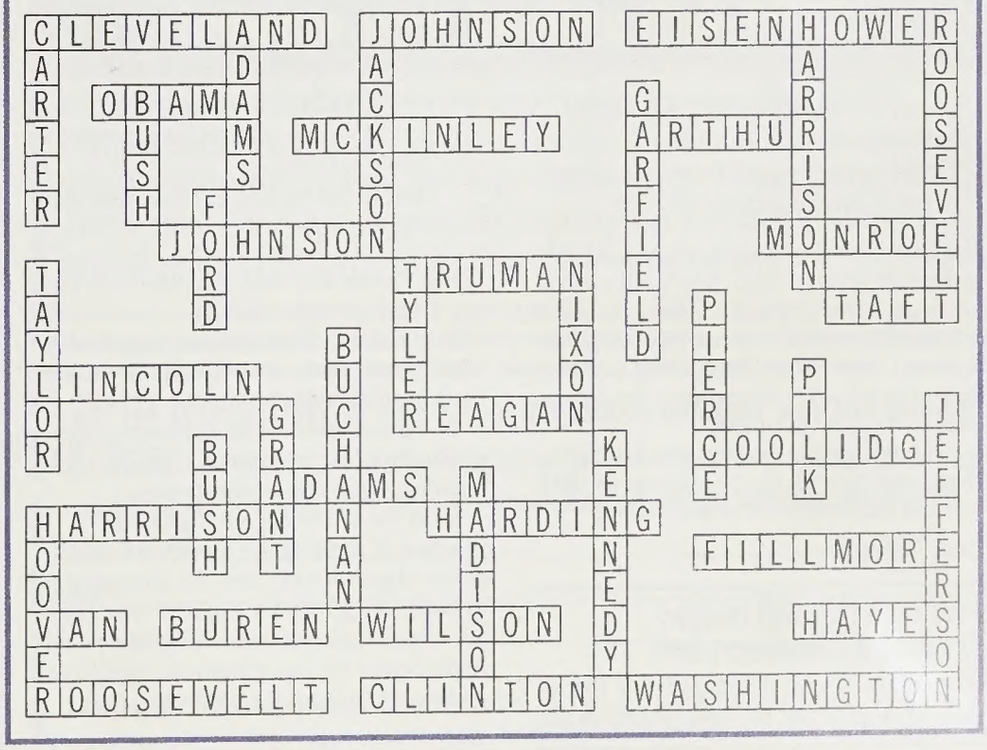

White Chicken Chili

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and chopped, optional
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 2 cans (15½ ounces each) great northern beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 1 to 1¼ teaspoons ground cumin
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- ¼ cup cold water
- 2 cups cubed cooked chicken

In a large saucepan, cook the onion, jalapeno if desired and garlic in oil until tender. Stir in the broth, beans, parsley, lime juice and cumin; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Combine cornstarch and water until smooth; stir into chili. Add chicken. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened.

Yield: 6 servings

Lasagna Soup

- 1 pound ground beef
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 1 package (7¾ ounces) lasagna dinner mix
- 5 cups water
- 1 can (14½ ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 can (7 ounces) whole kernel corn, undrained
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 small zucchini, chopped

In a Dutch oven or soup kettle, cook beef and onion over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Add the contents of lasagna dinner sauce mix, water, tomatoes, corn and Parmesan cheese; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add the lasagna noodles and zucchini. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes or until noodles are tender. Serve immediately.

Yield: 10 servings

Find more than 500 recipes at www.carolinacountry.com

Unless otherwise noted, recipes courtesy of Taste of Home. For more recipes, visit www.tasteofhome.com

Caramel Pecan Cheesecake Pie

- 1 sheet refrigerated pie pastry
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1¼ cups chopped pecans
- 1 jar (12¼ ounces) fat-free caramel ice cream topping

  Additional fat-free caramel ice cream topping, optional

Line a 9-inch deep dish pie plate with pastry. Trim and flute edges. In a small bowl, beat the cream cheese, sugar, 1 egg and vanilla until smooth. Spread into pastry shell; sprinkle with pecans.

In a small bowl, whisk remaining eggs; gradually whisk in caramel topping until blended. Pour slowly over pecans.

Bake pie at 375 degrees for 35–40 minutes or until lightly browned (loosely cover edges with foil after 20 minutes if pie browns too quickly). Cool on a wire rack for 1 hour. Refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight before slicing. If desired, garnish with additional caramel ice cream topping.

Yield: 6–8 servings

From Your Kitchen

Brunswick Stew

The day before

- 1½ pounds chuck roast
- ½ pound small pork loin
- 2 whole chicken breasts
- 5 pounds potatoes, skinned and cubed

Cook the chicken and beef together in a crockpot on low. Cook the pork in a crockpot also (does not take as long to cook as beef and chicken). Cook until meats are done, and when the chicken comes off the bones. Remove chicken skins and bones, then shred all the meat. Cook the potatoes separately in water.

The next day

- ½ large onion, chopped
- 1 jug (46 ounces) tomato juice
- 2 large cans (28 ounces each) crushed tomatoes
- 2 bags (14 ounces each) frozen butterbeans
- 2 bags (14 ounces each) frozen corn
- 1½ sticks butter
- 1 can (10.75 ounces) tomato puree
- ⅔ cup ketchup
- 3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 3 tablespoons vinegar
- 2 tablespoons hot sauce, or more
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 3 teaspoons salt, or more to taste
- 2½ teaspoons pepper, or more
- 2 tablespoons crushed red pepper
- 1 can (6 ounces) tomato paste
- 2 quarts of water, or more to thin the soup out if it is too thick

Put all these ingredients along with the meats in a large heavy duty pot and cook on low for about 4 hours. Stir often to keep it from sticking.

Yield: At least 2½ gallons

NOTE: The origin of Brunswick stew is disputed in the American Southeast, but as a fundraiser to feed a crowd the traditional way to make it is in a large iron pot over an open flame, stirred with a wooden oar. Some insist on using rabbit or squirrel meat as well.

This recipe comes from Debby Wiggins of Wrightsville Beach.

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Only the "Robin Hood of Watchmakers" can steal the spotlight from a luxury legend for under $200!

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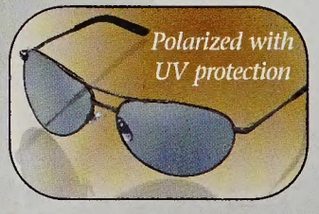

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